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CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE BRITISH ARCHIVES  
CONCERNING TEXAS, 1837-1846

IV

EDITED BY EPHRAIM DOUGLASS ADAMS

KENNEDY TO BIDWELL<sup>1</sup>

*Life Cert. Circular.*      On board the Ship. "Ellen Brooks,"  
At Sea. December 31st. 1842

Sir.

I have to report that, from the 16th of November to the present date, I have been a passenger in the Ship "Ellen Brooks," bound from Liverpool for New Orleans (U. S.) by way of which city I am to proceed to Galveston, Texas, there to enter upon the execution of my duties as Her Britannick Majesty's Consul.

William Kennedy.

John Bidwell, Esq., etc.

ELLIOT TO ABERDEEN<sup>2</sup>

No. 1.      Galveston January 5th 1843.

My Lord,

With reference to my despatches No. 10 and No. 18 of last year, I have now the honor to transmit to Your Lordship the copy of a note from Mr. Jones, the Secretary of State upon the subject of those communications.<sup>3</sup> Being aware that certain respectable British Merchants here, have duties to pay into the Custom-house in the course of a month, I propose to call upon this Government to let those Gentlemen hold themselves liable to me for the sum of \$3840, presenting my acknowledgement to the Custom-house in satisfaction of their duties to that extent. I can hardly doubt that it will be in my power to satisfy the Govern-

<sup>1</sup>F. O., Texas, Vol. 3.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, Vol. 6.

<sup>3</sup>Jones to Elliot, December 24, 1842. In Garrison, *Diplomatic Correspondence of the Republic of Texas*, III, 1063-1064; in *Am. Hist. Assoc. Report*, 1908, II.

ment of the necessity of forthwith adjusting the claim for the "Eliza Russell" by these reasonable means, and indeed I take the liberty to submit to Your Lordship that I perceive no risk in the immediate advance of a sum of £700 to Mr. Joseph Russell<sup>1</sup> if Your Lordship shall see fit to recommend such a step to the consideration of the Treasury. The sum of £700 is specified, because that amount would fall so far within the extent appropriated by Congress as to leave sufficient room for deficiency from course of exchange, or by any other mode of remittance that might become necessary arising from the manner that payment may be made.

It has occurred to me, that Your Lordship, taking into consideration the length of time that Mr. Russell has waited for the adjustment of his claim, may desire to afford him some relief, and believing that, that may be safely extended him under the circumstances now stated, I have ventured to offer this suggestion

Charles Elliot

To the Right Honorable

The Earl of Aberdeen. K. T.

ELLIOT TO ABERDEEN<sup>2</sup>

No. 2.

Galveston, January 15th. 1843.

My Lord,

The detention of the steam boat which conveys these despatches to New Orleans, enables me to forward a note of intelligence this morning received from Houston. It is much to be wished, that these confusedly reported accounts may be exaggerated, but there is certainly reason to apprehend that some sinister event has occurred.<sup>3</sup>

I learn that Congress was to separate in the course of the ensuing week, and that no material alteration of the Tariff had been carried.

In other particulars affairs remain in the position reported in my last despatches.

Charles Elliot

To the Earl of Aberdeen, K. T.

<sup>1</sup>Owner of the *Eliza Russell*.

<sup>2</sup>F. O., Texas, Vol. 6.

<sup>3</sup>This refers to the disastrous Mier expedition of December, 1842. A cutting is enclosed from *The Houston Morning Star*, January 14, 1843.

ELLIOT TO ABERDEEN<sup>1</sup>

No. 3.

Galveston, January 23rd. 1843

My Lord,

I have the honor to acknowledge Your Lordship's despatch No. 20 of December 3rd. 1842.

It will be observed in Mr. Jones's note<sup>2</sup> of the 24th Ultimo transmitted in my despatch No. 1 of this year, that the claim of certain British subjects for lands in Texas will be presented to the consideration of Congress by the President

Since I have been in Texas I have deemed it my duty to examine the nature of these claims, with all the attention in my power, and I have formed the opinion that the Land Law of this Country is utterly unsustainable, violating universally received principles of a general nature, and carried out by Congress beyond the plain intention and limitations of fundamental authority, that is, beyond the Constitution of the Republic.<sup>3</sup>

That instrument declares that "*the protection of the public domain from unjust and fraudulent claims and quieting the people in the enjoyment of their lands is one of the great duties of this convention,*"<sup>4</sup> and there upon specially provides that a certain grant made in behalf of John Mason of New York, by the Legislature of Coahuila and Texas in 1834, was "from the beginning null and void," because it was contrary to articles 4th, 12th, and 15th of the laws of 1824 of the General Congress of Mexico, and because one of the said acts had for that reason by the said General Congress of Mexico been declared "null and void"

The special declaration of this case is [in] the Constitution, the distinct specification of the cause of the defect of that title, and the inherent character of that defect, prove that the Constitution never intended to concede to Congress a right to violate titles, and actually disturb possession, lawfully emanating from the Congress of Mexico. The violation of the possessions of that

<sup>1</sup>F. O., Texas, Vol. 6.

<sup>2</sup>See p. 184, note 3.

<sup>3</sup>A general résumé of the land legislation of Texas is given in Wooten (editor), *A Comprehensive History of Texas*, I, 785-848.

<sup>4</sup>Throughout the quotations given the italics are Elliot's. Errors made by Elliott are corrected by bracket [ ] insertions, after comparison with Poore, *Charters and Constitutions*, II, 1760-1763.

authority, and its special act, were, on the contrary the fundamental grounds for the annulment of the grant declared to have been irregularly made to Mason in 1834.

But the Constitution further provides that "with a view to the simplification of the land system and the protection of the people and Government from litigation and fraud a *General Land Office* shall be established, where all the Land titles of the Republic shall be registered, and the whole territory of the Republic shall be sectionized in a manner [hereafter] to be prescribed by law, which shall enable the officers of the Government or any citizen to ascertain with certainty the lands that are vacant, and those lands which may be covered with valid titles"

I certainly do not find any authority in this provision for the Constitution to confiscate property lawfully acquired, and partially possessed, under the provisions of the general law of Mexico, legally carried out by the legislature of Coahuila and Texas: and I am satisfied that the special provision of the Constitution in the case of Mason's grant, and the causes of that provision, plainly proves, that the subsequent Confiscatory enactments of Congress were fundamentally illegal.

It may not be misplaced to observe here, in further proof of the intention and limitations of the Constitution that it provided that "whereas many surveys and titles [to land] have been made, whilst most of the people of Texas were absent from home serving in the campaign against Bexar, it is hereby declared that all the surveys and locations of land made *since* the Act of the late consultation 13 Nov. 1835<sup>1</sup> closing the Land Offices, and all titles to Land *made since* that time are and shall be null and void."

It was not said or intended that all the contracts, surveys, and locations made agreeably to law *before* that act of Consultation should be null and void, but it is particularly, and justly provided in the 16th article of the declaration of rights that "no retrospective or ex post facto law or laws impairing the obligation of contracts, shall be made." In the short history of this Country it is difficult to turn to any advantage achieved, to any evil averted, or to any mischief foreseen or deprecated, without find-

<sup>1</sup>Date, "13 Nov. 1835," inserted by Elliot.

ing General Houston's name and weight, enlisted upon the side of conduct, wisdom, and justice.

The original Land Bill and the one which forms the law of the land were passed in spite of his veto by the Constitutional majority, and I cannot do better in this brief acknowledgment of Your Lordship's instructions in the despatch No. 21. than to forward copies of those sound and striking papers.<sup>1</sup>

I transmit also an abstract of the present Land law in which Your Lordship will observe that Congress consummated the manifest injustice of their proceedings by shutting out aliens or the assignees of aliens from the relief provided in the bill, for other claimants.<sup>2</sup>

Under all the circumstances of the case I have considered it advisable to pause 'till I am in possession of the determination taken by Congress upon the claim of Messrs. Egerton, Pryor, O'Gorman, etc.<sup>3</sup> and the grounds of it, before I enter at length, upon the subject of this most important claim, forming the subject of Your Lordship's present instructions. But reflection leads me to the opinion that the firm establishment of these unquestionable rights of the Queen's subjects might most justly and conveniently be made the subject of an express article, in any treaty concluded between this Republic and Mexico; and I would further submit that it might be left optional by that article, with the claimants, to accept a commutation in other land in this Republic, under special Government patents, or in money, as they may best like: The amount of Land or money compensation to be determined by a joint commission of persons named by the British Government, and by the Government of this Republic with the power of umpire in British hands.

It will be my duty to communicate, with Your Lordship again at an early date upon this subject.

Charles Elliot.

To The Earl of Aberdeen, K. T.

<sup>1</sup>Two letters from Houston to the Land Office, December 21, 1836, and June 8, 1837.

<sup>2</sup>Printed copy of Sections 26 and 27 of the General Land Laws.

<sup>3</sup>These land claims, as well as the more important Beales claim, were based on grants obtained from Mexico, and in the opinion of Texan officials were not valid. For the Texan view of the matter, see Jones to Elliot, September 19, 1843: Garrison, *Diplomatic Correspondence of the Republic of Texas*, III, 1129-1136, in *Am. Hist. Assoc. Report*, 1908, II.

P. S.

I take this occasion to acknowledge Your Lordship's despatches Nos. 18 and 19 of Decr. 3. 1842

ELLIOT TO ABERDEEN<sup>1</sup>

No. 4.

Galveston, January 28th. 1843.

My Lord,

Since the date of my despatch No. 2 of this year (15th January) I am concerned to report, that authentic information has reached this place from Matamoras via New Orleans, confirming the surrender of that portion of the Texian force, under Colonel Fisher, which had separated itself from the direction of the Officer appointed by this Government, and continued the movement beyond the Rio Grande: a movement to which the disregard of the authority of the Officer, acting under the orders of Government has given a character that may be attended with very unhappy consequences to these prisoners. It appears that this disaster occurred at a small town called "Mier" on the right bank of the Rio Grande between 20 and 30 leagues above Matamoras.<sup>2</sup> I have not seen the Mexican report, but it can scarcely be necessary to say to Your Lordship, that the statement of their loss in the Texian account forwarded in my despatch No. 2, deserves no credit.

I hear in various quarters that a volunteer expedition of some extent is preparing in the South Western part of the Union, with the purpose to make another attempt to penetrate into the Northern Provinces of Mexico through Upper Texas, during the approaching spring, strengthening themselves with such reinforcements as can be collected in the passage through Texas, and it is also said that a simultaneous attempt is to be made on Matamoras by sea.

It appears to me to be proper to mention this rumour but I have no means of judging of it's accuracy. Indeed it is not easy for a

<sup>1</sup>F. O., Texas, Vol. 6.

<sup>2</sup>On January 24, 1843, Houston wrote privately to Elliot in regard to the Mier prisoners. This letter was the ground of the accusations later made against Houston by General Thompson (Green, *Journal of the Texian Expedition against Mier*, Appendix II). For extract from the letter, see Elliot to Aberdeen, Secret, June 8, 1843. Enclosure 2. This will be published in a later number of THE QUARTERLY.

person in public employment in this part of the world to determine what of rumour ought to be stated, and what may be left unheeded; for whilst common report is at least as discursive and venturous here, as elsewhere, it is a material consideration that Government has less control in the United States, than elsewhere: And strange projects and hazardous modes of operation with respect to Mexico, seem to be in the fair way of attempt, whenever they become the subject of general conversation.

Perhaps Your Lordship will give me leave to add to this reflection that the increasing white population of the Slave States (persons engaged in professions, and emigrants from Europe not ashamed to labor, excepted) is almost entirely without steady occupation. Unscrupulous, fearless, and enterprising, and with exaggerated notions of the wealth of Mexico, it is certain that the project of an incursion into that Republic, is highly popular amongst the people of that part of the Union. I believe that the least success of one of these chance expeditions to the westward of the Rio Grande would be the signal for a formidable irruption into Mexico, of which the first stage, it is quite possible, would be permanent settlement as far as the mountains.

It may be thought in some degree to sustain these reports that the Texian Congress during its recent session passed a Law appointing General Rusk<sup>1</sup> to be Major General of the forces of the Republic whenever they should be called into the field, and placing the appropriation for military purposes at his disposition, irrespective of any control on the part of the President; known to be adverse to aggressive war against Mexico. The gentleman in question is an inhabitant of Eastern Texas, and it is possible that his nomination was considered likely to be acceptable to volunteers in the United States, preparing for the incursion into Mexico. The President of course returned this bill without his approval, but it was passed by the Constitutional Majority.

The movements of Mexico with respect to Texas will probably be determined by the results in Yucatan, and Your Lordship must no doubt receive earlier and more trustworthy information upon that subject, than any that it can be in my power to transmit from

<sup>1</sup>Thomas J. Rusk, elected by Congress in 1843 to be major-general of militia.



this quarter: But in the mean time I regret to say that this country is bereft of resource, and the counsels best suited to its situation have been disregarded with disastrous consequences.

Upon the whole, so far as I can judge, it seems clear that the eager party in Texas for aggressive war, on the one side, and the Mexican Government on the other are rapidly accomplishing the purposes which the Mexican Secretary of State, in the late correspondence with the American Government,<sup>1</sup> charges to the Cabinet at Washington. The chance of the permanent re-establishment of Mexican Authority in Texas is gone, but this harassing mode of warfare on the part of Mexico at vast expense and danger to itself, and this futile response on the part of Texas, present a high probability of one of two results: Either the Mexicans will achieve so much of success in Texas, as will induce a complication, east of the Sabine, or the Texians and their American volunteer allies, very eager to visit Mexico, will force their way into that country, in considerable strength, and with what may be taken to be, a certainty of drawing on a war with the United States.

In every way that the consequences present themselves to my mind, it seems next to certain, that, unless a peace between these two Republics can be accomplished in some brief space of time, on terms calculated to encourage a good feeling on the part of Texas to Mexico, Texas will soon be annexed to the United States: And entertaining that opinion, I join to it the belief, that there is no earnest disposition at Washington to see the Independence of Texas acknowledged by Mexico, particular[ly] since it has been supposed that Her Majesty's Government takes an interest in accomplishing that result.

I avail myself of this occasion to mention that we have been recently visited by Her Majesty's Sloop *Electra*, touching here on her way from Havana to Vera Cruz, and I have also to report that Mr Neill, concerning whom I wrote to Your Lordship, has made his escape from Mexico,<sup>2</sup> and is now in Texas.

Charles Elliot

To The Right Honorable

The Earl of Aberdeen, K. T.

<sup>1</sup>This refers to Webster's offer of mediation (1842) and its rejection by Mexico.

<sup>2</sup>For an account of the escape of Andrew Neill, see *THE QUARTERLY*, XIII, 313-317.

ELLIOT TO ABERDEEN<sup>1</sup>

No. 5.

Galveston 4th February 1843.

My Lord,

The inclosure is a letter which I have addressed to the Secretary of State of this Republic agreeably to Your Lordship's instructions of the despatch No. 20 of last year.

Finding from an account of the proceedings of Congress during last Session that no steps had been taken, founded upon the representation I had made to this Government on the 30th September last respecting the claim of Messrs. Egerton, Prior, O'Gorman, etc. etc. I have felt it incumbent upon myself to put forward this claim of Mr. Beales without further delay.

Charles Elliot

To The Right Honorable.

The Earl of Aberdeen, K. T.

ELLIOT TO JONES<sup>2</sup>

[Enclosure.]

Galveston 4th February 1843.

Sir,

Requesting your reference to a note, which I had the honor to address to you on the 30th September last, in support of the claim of certain British Subjects to Lands in Texas, it is now my duty to put forward another and more weighty case of the like nature, recently committed to me by Her Majesty's Government, namely, that of John Charles Beales, and others Her Majesty's subjects claiming under Beales.

The Lands comprised in these last claims, are those known as the "Arkansas grant" the "Milam or Rio Colorado grant," "the Rio Grande grant," and nine grants in fee simple, of eleven leagues each containing 438,411 793/1000 acres English, located on the Rio Nueces.

<sup>1</sup>F. O., Texas, Vol. 6.<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.* This letter is listed in the *Calendar* of Garrison, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, etc., but since it was actually printed only in Texas newspapers of the day, it is included here. In similar cases it is thought advisable to include important documents unless they have previously been printed in Garrison's *Diplomatic Correspondence*, or in other collections, or files, generally available, such as *Niles' Register*.

I am sensible that the limits of these extensive claims and generally the particulars of the title must be known to the Government of the Republic, but for the sake of form, I have considered it proper to annex the accompanying abstract of the dates and limits of the grants collected from the "Exhibits" of a memorial presented to Her Majesty by J. C. Beales, in the course of last year, on his own behalf and that of others claiming under him. And in order that the grounds of Mr. Beales' appeal to the Queen, may be fully known to this Government I also transmit herewith a copy of his memorial presented to Her Majesty

Since I have been in Texas, it has been incumbent upon me to consider these claims with all the attention in my power: And confining the expression of my opinion upon the Land Legislation of this Republic, solely to those provisions which affect the rights and claims of British subjects, I must declare that the provisions of Law complained of by Mr. Beales and the others, seem to me to be unjust and untenable. This opinion rests upon the principles, that the Sovereignty of this Republic could succeed only to the possessions of the former Sovereignty; that private rights ought to have been secured; that the New Sovereignty is bound faithfully and fully to carry out the obligations entered into by the former; and finally that well established rules, with respect to rights not matured, or with respect to conditions prevented, interrupted or rendered impossible by a circumstance of such overruling force as the breaking out of the War of Independence in 1835, and its continuance to this period, have been violated by the Confiscatory Enactments of Congress, in the particulars set forth by these British subjects. But beyond this, it seems plain, to my judgment that the Constitution inhibits Legislation of the nature here complained of, by clear general reservation and by implication, unavoidably deducible from its own provisions respecting defective titles, said to emanate from the former Sovereignty.

"No aliens" says the 10th Section of the General Provision of the Constitution shall hold lands in Texas except "by titles emanating directly from the Government of this Republic." This exception certainly appears to involve a ratification of all titles *emanating directly from* the Government of which this Government is the successor, and to the obligations of which it is lawfully and justly bound: In other words it appears to have been

the purpose of this provision to place this Government for the maintenance of the public faith, and for objects of policy, in the exact situation of the former Government. There can be no warrant in this provision of the Constitution to distrust what has been legally done by the former Sovereignty in behalf of Aliens, and it certainly remains to seek for that sanction elsewhere.

The Constitution declares that "whereas the protection of the public domain from unjust and fraudulent Claims, and quieting the people in the enjoyment of their lands, is one of the great duties of this Convention, and whereas the Legislature of Coahuila and Texas having passed an act in the year 1834, in behalf of General J. T. Mason of New York and another on the 14th day of March 1835, under which the enormous amount of eleven hundred leagues of land has been claimed by sundry individuals, some of whom reside in foreign countries, and are not Citizens of the Republic, which said acts are contrary to articles fourth, twelfth, and fifteenth, of the laws of 1824, of the General Congress of Mexico, and one of said acts, for that cause, has by said General Congress of Mexico, been declared null and void. It is hereby declared that the said act of 1834 in favor of J. T. Mason, and of the 14th March 1835 of the said Legislature of Coahuila and Texas, and each and every grant founded thereon, is, and was from the beginning, null and void; and all surveys made under pretence of authority derived from said acts, are hereby declared to be null and void; and all eleven league claims, located within twenty leagues of the boundary line between Texas, and the United States of America which have been located *contrary to the Laws of Mexico*, are hereby declared to be null and void."

The specification of the causes of the defects of Mason's title, and the alledged intrinsic character of that defect, and the annulment of all eleven league claims located within 20 leagues of the United States of America, said to be located *contrary to the Laws of Mexico*, prove; that it was never intended to delegate to Congress, a right to confiscate titles, and disturb actual possession lawfully emanating *from* the Congress of Mexico. The declared violation of the provisions of the authority of the Congress of Mexico, and it's own special act thereupon, were on the contrary, the fundamental grounds for the annulment of the grants represented to have been irregularly made to Mason in 1834 and 1835.

In the same Session it is declared "with a view to the simplification of the Land system, and the protection of the people and Government from litigation and fraud a General Land Office shall be established, where all the Land titles of the Republic shall be registered, and the whole territory of the Republic shall be sectionized, in a manner hereafter to be prescribed by law, which shall enable the officers of the Government, or any other citizen to ascertain with certainty, the lands that are vacant, and those lands which may be covered with valid titles."

The enactments of Congress for the establishment of a Land Office founded upon this provision, contain the clauses of which these British subjects complain, but it never can be maintained that the Constitution granted or intended a sanction for such enactments in delegating to Congress, the task of establishing an Office for the registry of land titles. The Lands now in question were covered by valid titles; and it assuredly required the prevailing force of a Confiscatory declaration from which there was to be no appeal, to abrogate those titles.

In further proof of the purpose and limitation of the Constitution, if further proof be necessary, it was declared "that whereas many surveys and titles to land have been made whilst most of the people of Texas were absent from home, serving in the Campaign against Bexar it is hereby declared that all the surveys and titles to land, made since the act of the late consultation closing the Land Office, and all titles to Land made since that time, are, and shall be null and void."

This provision (with the provision respecting Mason's grant, and the specification of the objects and purposes for which a Land Office was to be established) appears distinctly to define, and limit the power delegated to Congress respecting Legislation upon the subject of titles to Lands.

And mindful of the principle of the Constitution of Texas that every right not expressly delegated is reserved, it certainly does seem impossible to claim a tacit sanction for enactments of retrospective and confiscatory Legislation, in an instrument of fundamental and liminary authority, so express upon the subject of titles to land, and of which it is a cardinal rule that "no retrospective or ex post facto law or laws impairing the obligation of contracts, shall be made."

I need scarcely say that the President's messages returning the Land Bills to Congress, without his approval, are known to me; and bearing as they do, so forcibly upon the subject of these claims, I have thought it convenient to forward copies of them to Her Majesty's Government.

Upon the general consequences of that Legislation so clearly foreseen, and so emphatically deprecated, in those masterly papers, it is not my province to remark: But speaking of the particular rights forming the subject of this communication it is a source of regret indeed, that the President's objections to the Bills was unavailing

I had hoped that Congress would not separate, without passing some just and effectual measure of relief for alien claimants, in the situation of these parties founded upon the representation which I had the honor to address to this Government on the 30th September last: That hope, however, has been disappointed, and it remains for me to state, in obedience to my Instructions, that unless the facts set forth by these British claimants are refused or a satisfactory explanation given, The Texian Government must be aware that Her Majesty's Government would be fully authorised to take the necessary steps for enforcing the just claims of Her Majesty's subjects.

I commit these cases, recommended by every consideration of justice, and I use the freedom to add of sound policy, with the confident persuasion, that they will have the cordial support of the President. I cannot but express the sanguine hope too, that Congress at this more advanced period of the progress of the Republic will remedy in the behalf of these claimants, the effects of wrongful Legislation, probably attributable to haste and pressure, incidental to the early and disturbed state of affairs in which it was passed.

Charles Elliot

To The Honorable Anson Jones.

N. B.

The inclosures adverted to in the letter of which the above is a copy have not been forwarded to England because, it is understood, that a copy of Mr. Beales' Memorial and of the book from which the abstract has been drawn up must be in the Department.

Charles Elliot.

ELLIOT TO ABERDEEN<sup>1</sup>

*Secret.*

Galveston February 5th. 1843

My Lord,

The boat from Houston has just brought me a private letter from the President, of which I beg leave to transmit an Extract. Your Lordship will no doubt be struck with the importance of these views, coming from that quarter, and they have certainly strengthened me in those opinions which I had felt it my duty to submit in my despatch No. 4 of this year, written a few days since.

This is the first hint I have ever had of the President's ideas upon this Subject, drawn from him, I have no doubt, by strong impression of the direction and force of circumstances, by the pressure of opposition made to his administration, and mainly by a feeling of entire confidence in the friendly professions of Her Majesty's Government.

Your Lordship will be best able to distinguish what there is of mere advocacy in this Statement of opinion, or what may be taken to be the result of General Houston's sincere Convictions, or of actual suggestion from influential quarters in a contiguous Country

So far as my own judgment in that respect may be considered worthy of attention, I would say that I have no doubt General Houston has said what He believes, and probably less than He knows; neither do I question that the settlement of this Country upon an independent footing would be most agreeable to his personal opinion, and ambition.

But He perhaps thinks that there is no choice between very early settlement on that principle, or very early adhesion to the growing feeling for annexation

I have thought it my duty to place this letter under cover to Mr. Fox, with the impression that Your Lordship might desire the advantage of any views or information from him without loss of time, and I shall also send a copy to Mr. Pakenham.

Charles Elliot.

To The Earl of Aberdeen, K. T.

<sup>1</sup>F. O., Texas, Vol. 6.

HOUSTON TO ELLIOT<sup>1</sup>

[Enclosure.]

Extract from a Private letter of President Houston to Captain Elliot dated Washington January 24. 1843.

"There is a subject now mooted in Texas which it seems to me will appeal directly to Her Majesty's Government. I mean that of annexation to the United States

"Some of our Journals are much in favor of the Measure. Eastern Texas contains but few dissenting voices to the Measure. I find from the incertitude of our situation that nine tenths of those who converse with me are in favor of the Measure upon the ground that *it will give us peace*. Upon this point of our National existence I feel well satisfied that England has the power to rule! At this time the Measure has an advocacy in the United States which has at no former period existed. From the most authentic sources I have received an appeal on this Subject, and my co-operation solicited in producing the result of annexation

"It is a political question in the United States, as well as Sentimental. I take it that it is a Measure of the democratic party. The South is in favor of it for various reasons. The West and North West desire it because of a monopoly of the trade of Santa Fé, and the Californias. The Yankees will not be blind to the trade which such a Union will open to them in disposing of their Manufactures

"The relations which such a Union would create in the Pacific, and then the Bay of San Francisco as [have] a connexion with the extension of of the Oregon Settlements. If I am not mistaken I think you will readily perceive that the probabilities of the Measure succeeding in the United States are greater than they have been at any former period. Mr. Tyler is of the South. Mr. Clay is of the West. Mr. Van Buren and Mr. Webster are of the North.

"Annexation is to be a question with the political parties and aspirants in the United States. My own opinion is that both parties will advocate the policy. To defeat this policy it is only necessary for Lord Aberdeen to say to Santa Anna, 'Sir, Mexico

<sup>1</sup>F. O., Texas, Vol. 6.



must recognise the Independence of Texas.' Santa Anna would be glad of such a pretext. He could then say to the Mexicans 'You see how I am situated. I cannot go to War with England, our best friend with a probability of War with the United States and France.'

"This state of things would be desirable with him, in my opinion, as it would leave him free to establish his power and dynasty! The Texian Subject has answered the use of 'a tub for the whale' long enough, and He would like to get rid of all external troubles. But for this He requires a pretext, and He has incurred so many voluntary committals, that to get out of difficulty He must seem to act under constraint. This He could render as a satisfactory reason to the people, and even acquire favor by the course. In all these matters I may be mistaken, but I am honest in my convictions, that Texas and England would both be beneficiaries by this course. Time will tell the tale."

N. B.

The chief portion of the remainder of the letter is upon the subject of the General's anxiety respecting the persons lately Captured West of the Rio Grande.<sup>1</sup> And requesting that Mr. Pakenham may be moved to do what He can to avert dangerous consequences from them. The General grants that the disorderly action of their separation from the Officer acting under the orders of this Government is of highly serious consequence to them, but presses upon the fact that there was a Capitulation, and that the Mexican Government is bound to respect it. I am endeavouring to write to Mr. Pakenham upon the subject agreeably to the request, by this opportunity.

Charles Elliot

[Endorsed] In letter from Capn. Elliot marked "Secret" of Feb. 5. 1843.

<sup>1</sup>For a quotation from this portion of the letter, see Elliot to Aberdeen, Secret, June 8, 1843, enclosure 2. This will be published in a later number of *THE QUARTERLY*.

KENNEDY TO ABERDEEN<sup>1</sup>

No. 1.

Galveston. Texas.

February 11th. 1843.

My Lord.

I have the honor to inform Your Lordship that I arrived at Galveston on the 5th Instant, and immediately reported My arrival to Captain Elliot, R. N. Her Majesty's Consul General and Chargé d'Affaires in Texas.

In accordance with My Instructions, I have placed Her Majesty's Commission appointing Me Her Majesty's Consul at this port in the hands of Captain Elliot, by whom it has been transmitted to the Government of the Republic with an application for the necessary exequatur.

Permit Me to remark that the Communication I have had the honor to hold with Captain Elliot leads me to look forward to future Cooperation with that gentleman in the public Service as a very agreeable duty.

William Kennedy.

The Earl of Aberdeen, K. T.

ELLIOT TO ADDINGTON<sup>2</sup>*Private.*

Galveston. March 26th. 1843.

My Dear Sir.

I had hoped that the last Steam Boat from New Orleans would have brought me acknowledgments to the communications forwarded from here to the 16th Decr. but I have been disappointed, and I hear accounts of the rather careless modes of conveying the Mails from New Orleans to the Northward, particularly in the Southern part of the route, which leave me uneasy till I hear from England that my letters have been duly received.

It has occurred to me, however, that Her Majesty's Government may prefer to forward some of the communications by the way of the West Indies, and that consideration tends to reassure me. The last despatch in the diplomatic series which has been acknowledged in England is dated here on the 2d November.

<sup>1</sup>F. O., Texas, Vol. 7.<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, Vol. 6.

In outward appearances affairs in this quarter remain much as they did when I wrote to you last, in the past Month, but I cannot help believing that this sameness is apparent rather than real, and that in point of fact we are hastening forwards to material changes. So far as the aggressive power or purposes of Mexico be considered, in respect to this Country, you must no doubt have better means of judging than I can furnish, but it seems reasonable to suppose that the protraction of the Struggle in Yucatan must be shaking General Santa Anna's influence, and exhausting the crippled and severely collected resources of the Government.

We hear here, too, (but all our information concerning Mexican affairs comes to us through the United States, and must be received with great reserve) that another Federal movement is ripening, and that it will be supported by some leading Military Chieftains. Leaving these reports out of question, it may still be thought to be a reasonable calculation that any existing condition of things in Mexico will be replaced by another, within three or four years from it's Establishment, and if I am not mistaken the last final Settlement has already reached that measure of venerable duration.

We learn from New Orleans, that the two Texian Vessels of War at that place are at last preparing for Sea, (assisted by funds from Yucatan) and that they will get out in the course of a week or ten days. I am not able to judge of the well foundedness of these statements, but would observe generally of all manner of reports in these parts that they should be received as Dr. Johnson recommended of Short's Stories; Not too easily believed, for the very great probability is that they are false, not entirely disregarded for they may be true. What with my Ultra Malayan and Trans Atlantic drilling, it will be no wonder if I fall into an obstinate Pyrrhonism.

I have heard so little truth, and experienced so much injustice, that doubt and distrust is my way of being. The Treaty<sup>1</sup> between this Country and the United States has not yet been ratified by the Senate of the last, as it is alleged I am told, upon the ground that its provisions would lead to demands for conces-

<sup>1</sup>A treaty of commerce. The United States Senate refused ratification in certain essentials.

sions of a similar nature upon the part of the other South American Republics (and the Foreign powers having possessions in the West Indies with which the United States have Commercial treaties) thus disturbing the protective effect of their own tariff, upon their own South Western produce.

But it may be that there are other motives for declining to ratify the treaty. The N. Eastern interest would perhaps feel that relaxation of the contemplated nature in favor of Texian produce would gratify the demands from the opposite points of the Union for a general relaxation of the tariff. "You have let in Texian produce," they would reason "to our detriment." "Admit foreign articles of our Consumption, for our relief." Again mindful of the extremely pressed condition of this Country, and sensible of the difficulty of carrying the formal annexation of Texas by Legislative means, the S. W. party may think that the next best thing would be to leave affairs in such a state that the same result might virtually be achieved by a treaty of Commerce, and hence perhaps an unwillingness to conclude any treaty with this Country (it is most remarkable that there never yet has been one) till affairs are in their agony, from which they do not seem to be far removed.

Another topic deserving particular attention at this conjuncture is a Movement by an Anti Slavery party here. I always knew that such sentiments existed amongst some of the Settlers from the Free States, and a few of the most respected Citizens, but an Englishman who has just returned from travelling through a great part of the Republic assures me that there is a much more general and strengthening feeling in favor of such a course than he had conceived possible. I think he is mistaken in respect [to] the actual state of feeling, and a considerable degree of excitement here last week ending in the sudden dismissal of a Mr. Andrews from this Island (a Lawyer of talent and respectability of Houston who had come down to Galveston to test the state of opinion here) is a proof that in this Island at least there is in [no?] readiness for the immediate entertainment of such views. Upon the whole, however, I believe that sound opinions upon this topic are gaining strength and these South Western people are so exciteable, and so ready to jump from extreme to extreme, whenever they perceive the advantage of the leap, that it would never

surprise me to find the subject thrown upon favorable public attention by the very event of M. Andrew's forced departure.<sup>1</sup>

First comes violence, and then come reflection and sympathy, and indeed it is manifest that the advantages of abolition would be so immediate and so momentous, that they only need to be calmly thought of to make their way in the public mind. I am waiting in much anxiety for the next arrivals from New Orleans with the hope that it will bring me some acknowledgment of my despatches and letters as far down as the 27th Decr.

The "Great Western" I observe she was to sail from England on the 10th February. As soon as the Boat arrives I am going up to pay a short visit to the President at Washington [on the Brazos] which I have been prevented from doing for some weeks, by the extraordinary floods of the Rivers. The Mischief of extensive inundation has added itself to all the other troubles that have plagued this poor Country for the last 12 Months.

The people are rough and wild, but their constancy and courage are admirable. I hardly know any more painful and indeed humiliating subject of reflection than the comparative helplessness of our own poor English people, when one finds them thrown amongst these scheming, enterprising, and it is most distressing to add, almost invariably much better informed persons than themselves. The truth is that the poorer Classes of English people are broken in, or I should say broken down to do but one thing in this world, and then accustomed to all the conveniences and facilities of locomotion etc. etc. in our Country, they make but sorry work of it in taming the wilds, compared with the American races.

The training of our social and political mechanism (and my experience has taught me, military too) unfits men for rough uses and reverses. It must all work together perfectly *smoothly* and *successfully*, or it will scarcely work at all. These strange people *jolt* and *jar* terrifically in their progress but *on* they do get, and prosper too under circumstances where *our people* would

<sup>1</sup>Stephen Pearl Andrews, a lawyer of New Orleans; later of Galveston. After urging a plan of abolition in Texas, he went to England in 1843 seeking the aid of British Anti-Slavery Societies. His later life was spent in Boston and in New York, where he gained reputation as a scholar and writer. (Appleton, *Cyclopedia of Amer. Biog.*, I, 76.)

starve and die. I am sure it would be a wise and a right course to put forward some authoritative recommendation to the Queen's Subjects to direct their Emigration to parts of the British Dominions, or at all events not to entirely new Countries on this Continent.

Whenever the born British Emigrant comes into contact with the American or frontier Stations, you find the first squalid, poor and a Wreck, and the last making way chiefly *upon the Capital* which the others have brought with them.

With my excuses for this long letter and small amount of information

Charles Elliot.

H. U. Addington, Esqr.

ELLIOT TO ABERDEEN<sup>1</sup>

*Private.*

Galveston March 29th. 1843.

My Lord,

The delay of the Steam boat for a few hours enables me to transmit to Your Lordship the accompanying Statement of intelligence from Mexico received here two days since, via New Orleans.<sup>2</sup> I entertain no doubt of the genuineness of their proposals, but am necessarily without any means of forming an opinion upon the purposes or situation of the Mexican Government in relation to them

Upon the face of them, however, it is hard to think that General Santa Aña can entertain a serious hope or wish that they should be accepted in their present form. Their effect would be to leave this Country virtually independent of Mexico, with abundance of pretext for further disturbance and pretensions West of the Rio Grande, as soon as Texas is well strengthened, and Mexico still further enfeebled by unsuitable institutions, and that state of intestine trouble, which appears to be almost the usual condition of the Country.

Indeed it seems to me to be quite unintelligible that this project

<sup>1</sup>F. O., Texas, Vol. 6.

<sup>2</sup>An unidentified newspaper cutting referring to the proposal of a negotiation for peace, made by Santa Anna through James W. Robinson, a released prisoner.

of a Federal scheme of polity as respects Texas, and Central as respects the remainder of the Republic can be seriously put forward or expected to work particularly in the present situation of parties in Mexico.

It is possible however that these proposals may be no more than the first approach to some practicable solution of the dispute, and upon that point Your Lordship will of course have the means of forming a better judgment by the direct intelligence from Mexico, than any that can be provided upon information or suggestions from this quarter.

I do not write officially till this Government has signified its course regarding these proposals, but I naturally conjecture that, they will not openly take notice of them.

I am about to proceed to Washington to pay a short visit to the President, and shall address Your Lordship again as soon as I have returned.

My last dates from the Foreign Office are of the 2d February, but then without, acknowledgments of any despatches from here beyond those of the 2d November.

Charles Elliot.

To The Earl of Aberdeen, K. T.

KENNEDY TO ABERDEEN<sup>1</sup>

No. 2.

British Consulate.

Galveston March 29th 1843

My Lord,

I have the honor to inform Your Lordship that, on the 24th of February, I received from the Seat of Government, at Washington on the Brazos, a Note from the Secretary of State of the Republic of Texas accompanying the President's official recognition of My Commission as Her Majesty's Consul for Galveston

I beg to inclose an extract from the Government paper published at Washington,<sup>2</sup> not because of any terms of eulogy applied to so humble an individual as Myself, but as indicating the light in which the appointment is Viewed by the President, and

<sup>1</sup>F. O., Texas, Vol. 7.

<sup>2</sup>*The Tewan and Brazos Farmer*, February 18, 1843.

the prospect it holds out of My being enabled to promote British interests in this quarter

William Kennedy.

The Earl of Aberdeen, K. T.

ELLIOT TO ADDINGTON<sup>1</sup>

Steam Boat "Dayton"

On the Passage from Houston to Galveston

April 15th. 1843.

My Dear Sir,

The inclosure is the Copy of a letter which I have addressed to Mr. Packenham<sup>2</sup> at the request of the President that He should be moved to make the Communication it contains to General Santa Aña, and I have added some reflections of my own because it occurred to me that Mr. Packenham would wish to judge of any views of mine upon the effect of these propositions on the Government and people of this Country.

I took occasion to mention to the President that I was without any other Instructions than had already been made known to him respecting the feelings and purposes of Her Majesty's Government upon the subject of the close of the Contest, but I was persuaded they had in no degree relaxed. He assured me, and begged the assurance might be particularly conveyed to Lord Aberdeen that He continued to place implicit confidence in the friendly declaration of Her Majesty's Government, and it was in that spirit, and that trust, that He had felt himself bound to communicate to me what He had done respecting the condition of feeling concerning annexation to the United States.

I must feel that in the state of this Country it was no wonder that men[']s minds should turn that way, and it might be depended upon that the feeling was growing and gaining strength both here, and in the United States. I thanked him for what I was sure was the motive of this frank exposition of his views upon this subject; but it was one of great importance, and I could only say that I had lost no time in forwarding to England what He had been so good as to write to me on that Matter.

<sup>1</sup>F. O., Texas, Vol. 6. This despatch is not numbered.

<sup>2</sup>Pakenham. Elliot at times misspells the name.



My letter to Mr. Packenham contains the general substance of the President's remarks, and I must hope that indisposition will be my excuse to you for these few lines by the present occasion. Perhaps a few days rest at Galveston in the comparative comfort, (and at all events the cleanliness) of my own Cabin, will restore me, but the truth is that my health is shattered, and I do not look to make good weather of it through the ensuing hot season, so far to the South as this Country.

Charles Elliot.

To H. U. Addington, Esqr.

ELLIOT TO PAKENHAM<sup>1</sup>

*Private.*

Houston April 14th. 1843

My Dear Sir,

The last Boat from New Orleans has brought here a Citizen of this Republic of the name of Robinson who was captured at San Antonio on the occasion of it's Surprize by General Woll in September last, and the accompanying paper will place you in possession of his own account of the circumstances, and purposès of his release by General Santa Aña.

I was upon the point of starting to Washington to pay the President a short visit when these strange, and vaguely promulgated tidings reached Galveston, and I was with General Houston when Mr. Robinson arrived at Washington. The President placed in my hand the original of the paper General Santa Aña had delivered to Mr. Robinson, but except that it developed the particularity that New proposals were drawn from him by an *approach from Mr. Robinson*, I did not detect that that Gentleman had more to communicate to General Houston than had already been made known to him through the medium of his Newspaper.

In fact General Houston explicitly told me that Mr. Robinson brought him nothing but the papers in question; the substance of which you have here before you.

He observed that although this approach had found it's way before the Public, and came to him in a strange and informal manner indeed, still He would [state] his belief that it evinced a

<sup>1</sup>F. O., Texas, Vol. 6.

peacefulness of Spirit on the part of the Mexican Government, and [he was] disposed on his own side to proceed to all proper lengths for the Establishment of an honorable and desirable pacification, He hoped it might not be incompatible with your position to state to General Santa Aña that He was ready to send Commissioners to Mexico in furtherance of that object. He had to remark, however, that an armistice would be indispensably necessary before any proposals of a peaceful Nature could be entertained for without that there would be no deliberating calmly, or determining wisely on either part. General Houston then conversed with me upon the subject of this approach.

He believed that General Santa Aña had long since been convinced that there was no hope of the permanent re-establishment of Mexican Authority in Texas, and He was equally satisfied that General Santa Aña's avowed desire for a close of this futile contest was sincerely felt, both upon political considerations of various kinds, and pressing moment, and no doubt also for the sake of putting an end to a fruitless Waste of human life and happiness. He could readily understand the feeling which led General Santa Aña to shape this approach upon the condition of the acknowledgment of Mexican Sovereignty by Texas, but he could not suppose there was any deliberate purpose to adhere to that condition.

General Santa Aña's scheme involved the virtual separation of this Country from Mexico. They were to elect their own Officers from the highest to the lowest, there were to be no Mexican troops in Texas; they were to initiate and prepare their own Laws. He certainly could not understand to what extent or by what means this Sovereignty was to be enjoyed or exercised. It would be a shadowy Sovereignty indeed, but it was plain to his mind that the renewed difficulties and complications to which it would give rise would be very substantial answers. He could not but hope that calm consideration, and the voice of great powers, equally friendly to both Nations would lead them both to some safe resting place.

I told the President I should not fail to communicate what He had said to you, and living amongst these people I hope it may be unnecessary to offer you any excuse for some reflections of my own upon the same Subject.

It is certainly in no great spirit of disparagement of the people of Texas. In many respects, on the contrary I think them worthy of high admiration, for example in the spirit of daring adventure, and disregard of every kind of difficulty and hardship, I know not by whom they can be surpassed. It is certainly, then, I would repeat in no spirit of general disrespect, but purely of dispassionate observation of their variable and excitable political humour that I would remark I have never lived amongst any people more likely to abandon their solemn declaration of separation to any plausible exhibition of what was best for their immediate interests. Joined to this expansiveness of political consistency, you will scarcely need to be reminded of their actually pressed condition, and of the absence of those impulses which produce what we understand by patriotism; not to be looked for indeed amongst a people strange to the soil, and compounded for the most part of wandering and restless Emigrants. from the S. W. States of the neighbouring Union.

Speaking then of things as they actually are here, and of the people *now* living in this Country it would certainly not surprise me to find this project, temporarily favored, and perhaps it would not be hard for its advocates to shew them that General Santa Aña's scheme would be as profitable an arrangement for Texas and *the United States* as I am sure it would be a mischeivous one for Mexico.

The President, I confidently believe, will act only upon large and honorable views of what is due to his Country and to himself. But whilst He is sincerely and wisely averse to aggressive War in Mexico, I am persuaded that He is steadily anxious to secure the Independence of the Country, and I do not doubt that He is secretly preparing to resort to that course as vigorously as He can if the interference of Foreign powers shall not otherwise and promptly close this combat. There seems good reason to believe that He will succeed in establishing treaties with most of the Border Indians and when that is accomplished He will be in a better situation to turn to other projects.

General Santa Aña will be greatly mistaken indeed if He thought that Houston's real influence in this Country is weakening, or wished that it should, for He is very moderately disposed towards Mexico, and will strive hard to reach some safe and

creditable conclusion. But if he once raises his voice in the opposite way He will be followed by twenty thousand riflemen from the Western States of the Union, in less than 6 Months. To return however to General Santa Aña's scheme, I think you will concur with me that there is no soundness in a System, flimsily pretending to be of one kind, but essentially of a diametrically repugnant description. And of all the people and Governments on the Earth to select for this experiment of resting contented under a scheme of policy, declaratorily masterful, and really powerless, these reckless and enterprizing races that have found their way to this region, and the scantily scrupulous Government of the United States would assuredly be the most certain to shiver the fragile Machinery to atoms, at their first convenience

That the Government and people of the United States, moved under different motives, are perfectly agreed upon one point in this affair of Texas and Mexico, I make no doubt, and that is a disinclination to the recognition of it's Independence by Mexico. The adoption of General Santa Aña's present scheme would probably suit them all much better. It would effectually sponge out all that has been done in that way, and leave things as they were in 1836 (when they never expected Foreign Powers would recognize the Independence of Texas) with leisure to all parties, and full convenience to strengthen this Country, and open out renewed troubles and pretensions in a Westerly direction. I believe that that Government has no more settled purpose than to stretch itself Westward, and I think the present Cabinet at Washington is of the mind that Texas upon an independent footing would be a serious and growing obstacle in their progress thitherwards.

It appears to be reasoned that independent Texas with a very liberal commercial policy would adhere steadily to a balancing system, for it would leave Her a great emporium between Countries with high tariffs, and eager dispositions, and ready facilities to set them at nought. There is reason too in the suggestion (it has been put forward by leading people in America) that the influx of foreign Capital and principles to this Republic from other parts of the world, particularly from England, would pretty rapidly modify present sympathies. Men, they think, would soon begin to feel Texian, as well as to call themselves, Texians. In-

deed it is more true of the United States races, than of any other in the World that their first best Country ever is at home.

They will live friendly or fight with any people for profits sake. Long before I heard of this proposal of General Santa Aña's the impression was gaining strength in my mind that some intrigue was ripening at Washington (on the Potomac) for I had good reason to believe that there had been personal Communications between General Almonte, General Hamilton, Mr. Tyler and Mr. Calhoun, during last Autumn. Revolving the probable subject of that intercourse in my mind, it has sometimes occurred to me (and there is nothing in this proposal to disturb the surmise) that a formal and temporary reannexation of Texas to Mexico might be one of the proposed devices, and thereupon after some decent length of time, a renewal of General Jackson's Negotiation for the purchase of Texas from Mexico.

That might be a convenient mode enough of adjusting United States Claims on Mexico, without any transfer of funds, and perhaps it might be made more palatable to Mexico by proposing to pay a few more Million than General Jackson had offered. The Mexicans would perhaps be instructed by such advisers that this course would save appearances, and give them a handsome Salvage out of what was lost to them for ever, and their own aversion to have a Neighbour with a liberal Commercial policy would possibly help at the scheme. You are a much better judge of the probability of these speculations than myself, but entertaining no doubt at all of the answers of the Cabinet at Washington on the subject, I have thought it convenient to submit them to you. Considering the shape that this Matter has now assumed, (from the point of view that I regard it, and with such means and opportunities of forming a judgment as are within my reach) I cannot help thinking that Her Majesty's Government would regard a renewal of this futile Contest, always pregnant with more risk of inconvenient complication with the United States than there are any safe means of estimating, With great dissatisfaction General Santa Aña has now proposed a concession of all practical hold over the Country, and it will scarcely be agreeable to Her Majesty's Government to learn that a struggle has been reopened for a matter of form.

On the other hand you will know much better than I, how the

intelligence would be received in London that affairs here had been adjusted upon General Santa Aña's present scheme; a scheme effectually breaking up existing arrangements, and leaving behind the certainty of renewed and more serious complications. By late papers from England I observe that Her Majesty's and the French Governments have recently joined in a Note to the Republic of Monte Video, and Buenos Ayres saying in effect, that they might suit their own convenience about making a peace, but that it was necessary they should keep the peace. And I hope you will pardon me for expressing the wish that you may now think yourself in a situation to request the Mexican Government to suspend hostilities, and recommend me to say the like to this Government for such a length of time as might enable you to learn the pleasure of Her Majesty's Government upon this turn of affairs.

In my mind it is a scheme amounting, in few words, to nothing less than a swamping of this Country's Independence. And all the military and other arrangements, present and prospective, depending upon it, for the better convenience of the United States. They would be what General Houston calls the "beneficiaries" of such a solution. It is of course impossible that General Santa Aña can have any such thought or purpose as this last, but with deference, it seems hard to reconcile his entire earnestness in these proposals with any moderate degree of knowledge of character of these people, or of the circumstances connected with their situation

In every way that I regard this subject, looking at it from here, (but your point of view and experience will at once enable you to arrest any misconception into which I have fallen) it certainly seems to me important that there should be a *complete pause*, till you can receive Notice of the views of Her Majesty's Government. After the present turn of affairs shall be known in that quarter

We learn here that the two Texian Men of War are to get to Sea immediately from New Orleans, but the President privately assured me that the Commodore had orders to give up the Command of the Squadron for repeated disobedience of Instructions, and for a most unwarrantable interference in the affairs of Yucatan and Mexico. He shewed me his Messages to Congress upon

that subject, and they were strongly averse to the least interference of this Country in that struggle.

I have to make an excuse for my hard hand writing, but bad as it always is, I write with some considerable discomfort from sickness, in the hot room of a Houston Boarding House which is a manner of existence that I would not wish to my worst unfriends, and I have had bitter. The Steam Boat is to leave for New Orleans tomorrow, and having no time or convenience to write a despatch from here.—I shall take the liberty of enclosing a copy of this letter to Mr. Addington. I should add that the President wished the Communication to you to be made in a private form.

Charles Elliot.

His Excellency Richard Packenham, Esqr.

Copy.

C. E.

[Endorsed] In letter from Captain Elliot of April 15. 1843.